Moral Reflections

UPON THE

NUMBER

OF THE

ELECT,

Proving plainly from Scripture Evidence, &c.

That not One in a Hundred Thouſand (nay probably not One in a Million) from *Adam* down to our Times, ſhall be Saved.

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THE

Epiſtle Dedicatory,

TO THE

RIGHT HONOURABLE

THE

Marchioneſs of Regne.

May it pleaſe your Honour,

THERE is no Age of our Life, wherein we are not obliged to think of it's ſhort Duration, and the vaſt Eternity of that which will moſt certainly follow it. But they who ſee themſelves, as I do, near the End of their Stage, ſure, above all others, are the moſt particularly ingaged to make it their Continual Meditation: And I can aſſure you, Madam, that, as it is the moſt common Entertainment I allow my ſelf, ſo it is likewiſe, the greateſt Aſtoniſhment to me in the World, becauſe it gives me a clear Conviction that the groſs of Mankind do Live, as if they were never to Die. All their thoughts and buſtle amount only

to this, as the Apoſtle phraſes it, to purſue *the Luſts of the Fleſh, the Luſts of the Eye, and the Pride of Life*, and to Advance their Carnal Intereſts in this World, as if there was nothing more to hope for, or to fear, on the other ſide the Gulph which all muſt Shoot; or, at leaſt, as if it were but a matter of ſmall ſignificancy, to think what ſhall become of us when we are to go we know not where at Death. This ſtrange Stupidity would however be far leſs ſurpriſing than it is, if it were only among *Heathens*, that are under the exile of all other Illuminations, beſide that of their Corrupted Reaſon: But it is become Inexcuſable, This Inſenſibleneſs, among Perſons that are Born in a *Chriſtian World*, and that are Educated and Bred up in the Truths of the Goſpel, wherein, as *a Shining-light*, *Almighty God* has plac'd both Life and Immortality. And it was upon this Subject, Madam, that I had the Honour, ſome few days paſt, of holding a Converſation with you; And the Subject being of the laſt Weight and Importance, I have made ſince ſome ſerious Reflections upon it. I could wiſh, Madam, with all my Heart I was capable, though but in a ſmall Meaſure, by this Diſcourſe, to draw off ſome People from this profound Security, to which all are more or leſs inclined; but that is not the Work

of

of Fleſh and Blood; *God* himſelf muſt Work upon their Hearts, and Imprint therein his fear. My only Deſign in this Treatiſe, which I humbly beg to lay at your Honors Feet for Protection, has been to couch up in brief the ſeveral Reaſons that ſeem'd to me to be the moſt Material and Proper to awaken Men out of this moſt dangerous and deſtructive Lethargy, by diſcovering to them the ſmall Number of thoſe that may juſtifiably hope for Eternal Salvation. There are ſome Divines, very ſincere and upright, and others, that are too apt to believe whatſoever they deſire; and among many things, this eſpecially, that the Mercies of *God*, (as they are above all his Works) are of a vaſt Extent, and far beyond our poſſibility of finding out: But there are ſome others, whoſe Reaſons appear more ſtrong and ſinewy to me, that conclude, (and they bring the Holy Scriptures for their Buckler of Defence) that the Mercy of *God* is to be reſtrained to a fewer Number. This laſt Conſideration ought to be a powerful Incentive to ſtir up all thoſe, that have any ſober Thoughts about their Salvation, to work it out with Fear and Trembling; carefully to perform all the Duties of Piety and Charity which *God* requires of thoſe that make any pretentions to that moſt bleſſed Life,

Life; and to ſtrive, to the utmoſt of their Power, to enter in at the ſtrait Gate, for *Strait is the Gate, and Narrow is the Way, that leads to Life Eternal.*

THE Honour that you do me, Madam, in caſting your favourable regards upon me; but eſpecially that Piety which renders you ſo Eminently great; that knowledg of, and that Love you bear to, Sacred things, made me believe that you would not be diſpleaſed with me, if I ſhould preſume to ſet your honor's Name at the beginning of this ſhort Diſcourſe. I would gladly, Madam, preſent you with ſomething that was more Worthy of you; but I hope the Worth and Excellency of the Subject, and your own innate Goodneſs and Virtue, will ſupply the deficiency that you may find in the Compoſition. It will be an extream happineſs to me, to hear that this little Treatiſe pleaſes you, and that it is capable of giving you any Satisfaction among the ſeveral other holy Exerciſes of Piety, by which you are daily preparing your ſelf for that Bleſſed and moſt Glorious Eternity. Let me beſeech you, Madam, to receive it as a ſmall Teſtimony of that profound reſpect I bear you in the quality of

Madam,

Your Honor's moſt Humble, moſt Obedient, and moſt Obliged Servant,

Lewis Du-Moulin.

Moral Reflections upon the Number of the Elect.

THoſe that have Written concerning the Extent of *God's Grace*, & of the greater or leſs Number of them that are to be Saved, are divided in their Sentiments and Opinions. Some, who are but few in Number, as *Cœlius Secundus Curio, de amplitudine regni gratiæ*, have indeavoured to prove, That the Number of the Saved Ones, is much more great, than that of the Damned. Others make almoſt an equal diviſion of them, as *Zuinglius:* But the moſt believe, that the Number of the Damned is incomparably greater, than thoſe that are Saved; and that there is not above one Saved of a hundred Thouſand, or rather of a Million, from *Adam*, even to the Day of Judgment.

Thoſe who hold the two former Opinions, do ſtrongly preſs theſe Conſiderations.

1. *That* the firſt Man, who was the repreſentative of all Man-kind, was Saved; and that his Wife *Eve* was ſo too, becauſe the promiſe, *That the Seed of the Woman ſhould bruiſe the Serpent's Head*, belonged as much to *Eve*, as to *Adam:* that if, on one Hand, *Cain* was Damned; on the other, there is no doubt to be made on't, but that *Abel* was Saved; as likewiſe, *Seth.*

2. *That* the Law in its greateſt Rigour ſayes, That *God* puniſhes, but to the Third and Fourth Generation; but He ſhews Mercy to a Thouſand Generations.

3. *That* the Mercies of *God*, *Exod.* 34. *v.* 7. and *Numb.*

14. 18. are of a very large Extent. Upon which paſſages *Calvin* remarks, that in ſaying *God* forgives Iniquity, Tranſgreſſion, and Sin, He wonderfully advances the greatneſs of his Mercies, and of his Clemency; and that He makes us to underſtand He Pardons, not only little Sins, but alſo the moſt Enormous. *Tollens iniquitatem, peccatum, & ſcelus. Sic enim exprimitur magnitudo clementiæ, quæ non levibus tantum delictis dat veniam, ſed graviſſimis quibuſque Sceleribus.*

4. *That God* is ſlow to Anger, ready to Pardon, and ſhew Mercy, *Nehem.* 9. 17. and in 103. *Pſal.* 8. it is ſaid *Plenteous in Mercy.*

5. *That* He forgives Sins of the deepeſt dye.

6. *That* if an *Eſau*, was the Figure of the Reprobate, a *Jacob* was that of the Elect.

7. *That* the Separation in the 25. of *Mat.* 33. at the Day of Judgment, of the Juſt, from the Unjuſt, of the Sheep, from the Goats; and which alſo is repreſented by the two Thieves, the one on the Right Hand, and the other on the Left of *Jeſus Chriſt* on the Croſs, very viſibly demonſtrates the equal Number of the Saved, and the Damned; it being altogether unlikely, that *Jeſus Chriſt* would have us know, that for Millions of Goats, which he ſhould ſet on his Left Hand, He ſhould ſet but one or two Sheep on his Right.

8. *That* Saint *Paul* ſayes, that *God* would have all the World to be Saved; and he hath not Ordained us to Wrath, but that we ſhould obtain Salvation by *Jeſus Chriſt.*

9. *That* in the parables of thoſe that were invited to the Wedding Feaſt, for one ſingle Perſon, that had not on his Wedding Garment; of the three whereof, there was but one that did not put out his Talent to Uſury; that of ten Virgins, there were as many Wiſe as Fooliſh: It is evident, that at the leaſt, the Number of thoſe that are Saved, equals that of the Damned.

10. *That* the Work of *God*, and his Natural Inclination, is to do good to his Creatures, and to Pardon them their Sins; that he never puniſhes, but with regret and unwillingneſs, and that to deſtroy, and to chaſtiſe rigorouſly, *It is his Work, but it is his ſtrange Work; and his Act, but his ſtrange Act*, Iſa. 28. ver. 21.

11. *That*

11. *That* the Grace of *God* is exalted far above his Judgments, and his Severities. That there, *Where Sin has abounded, Grace has much more abounded.*

12. *That* if *Jeſus Chriſt* would have us to Pardon ſeven times, yea ſeventy-times ſeven, our offending Brother; there is no likelihood, but that *God* ſhould be much more Merciful, ſince he commands us Mortals to be ſo.

13. *And* if *God* promiſes to give a New Heart to all thoſe whoſe Sins he Pardons; who will believe that *God* ſhould Pardon an infinite number of perſons; but that he ſhould only give a New Heart to a few?

14. *And God* would not command us to ſay, *Forgive us our Sins*, if he had not had any intention to Forgive them; for he did not make that Command to ſend us away from him (as we ſay) like Fools, as we came.

15. *That* Man to whom *God* has given the Grace to Pardon all thoſe that have offended him, has a Tacite promiſe, that *God* will forgive him all his Sins.

16. *And* theſe Conſiderations, that of the Twelve, who were called to the Apoſtleſhip, there was but one *Judas*; that of two Thieves, one was Saved, and the other Damned: That for one in Hell, there was alſo one in *Abraham's* Boſom. That no Sin is ſo great (excepting that againſt the Holy Ghoſt) but it is Pardonable, *Since the Blood of* Jeſus Chriſt *cleanſes us from all Sin:* theſe Conſiderations, I ſay, ſeem to Teſtify, that at leaſt the Number of thoſe that are Saved, equals that of them that are Damned.

17. *They* mightily preſs, the infinite price, and value of the Merit, Death, and Satisfaction, and Redemption of *Jeſus Chriſt*, which is not only efficacious to Pardon an infinity of Sins, both for their Number and their Enormity; but alſo to Pardon an infinity of Men. That it is extreamly to leſſen the ends for which *Jeſus Chriſt* came into the World, if you admit that he only came into the World, to Redeem one Man of a Hundred, of a Thouſand, or of Ten Thouſand, or indeed of a Hundred Thouſand; not to add a Million.

18. *That* it is not to be believed, that *Jeſus Chriſt* at the Right Hand of his Father, does intercede but for one of a Hundred Thouſand of all Mankind, as thoſe would have us

that are of the third and laſt Opinion.

19. *They* do likewiſe urge mightily this Conſideration; that ſince none are in the State of Damnation, but who are under a perpetual *Weeping, Wailing, and Gnaſhing of Teeth*, and an Eternal Horror of Conſcience for their paſt offences, it rationally cannot be affirm'd of ſo many Millions of Millions of Heathen Children, that Dyed before ever they came to the uſe and exerciſe of Reaſon; and if *God* be favourable and merciful to thoſe (as who can determine to the contrary) it would be ridiculous to think, that *God* has reſerved their Parents alive, that have the uſe of Reaſon, to Damn them to all Eternity.

20. *It* is alledged alſo, that if *Jeſus Chriſt* Pray'd for thoſe that Crucified him, *á fortiori*, would one think, he Pray'd for them that have never known him?

21. *Who* will believe, ſay they, that *God ſo loved the World*, or that he has ſent his Son into the World, not to Condemn the World, but that it might be Saved by him: That *Chriſt is the Lamb of* God, *that takes away the Sins of the World*: that *God* ſent *Jeſus Chriſt* to Redeem *thoſe that are under the Law*: And that being *the Bread of Life*, He gave himſelf to the World, to give Life to it: That *God who hath delivered us from the Power of Darkneſs, and hath Tranſlated us into the Kingdome of his dear Son, in whom we have Redemption through his Blood, even the Forgiveneſs of our Sins*, Col. 1. 13, 14. and has diſplay'd unto us *the Riches of his Grace, wherein he hath abounded towards us in all Wiſdome and Prudence*, Eph. 1. 7, 8. Who will believe, I ſay, that by the World, you muſt underſtand, but one or two Perſons, among I know not how many Thouſands or Millions in the World? and that ſuch great Riches, and exceeding Grace, ſhould be only kept for ſo ſmall and inconſiderable a part of the World? and where is that Love towards the World, to let it walk, that is to ſay, periſh in it's own ways?

22. *They* ſay, that the Words of *Jeſus Chriſt*, That the Number of the *Choſen* is far leſs, than that of the *Called*, do not contradict their Opinion; who will have the Number of the Faithful, to exceed that of the Unfaithful: For there was but one unfaithful perſon among the Apoſtles; and yet notwithſtanding it is true, that more Apoſtles were *Called*, than *Choſen*.

BUT

BUT for all this, the Arguments of thoſe, who maintain that from the Days of *Adam* at the beginning, unto the end of the World, there is not one Perſon of Ten Thouſand, Saved; and it is well, if there be one of a Hundred Thouſand that is; are incomparably more ſtrong and nervous, than their Arguments are; who are of the Opinion, that the Number of the Saved, is equal to that of the Damned, or for another proportion of Number, of one Saved for a Thouſand, or Ten Thouſand that are not.

IN the firſt place, they do moſt eaſily enervate, and weaken all the Arguments of thoſe who hold the Opinion of *Cælius Curio Secundus*; and of the others too, that equal the Number of the Elect to that of the Reprobate. They ſay firſt of all, that if we ought not to be too Ingenious, to throw Men into a Deſpair of their Salvation; or of that of others, where an exceſs of Charity is pardonable: So likewiſe, we ought not to lull them aſleep in the depth of ſecurity, by a falſe perſwaſion, that they ſhall be Saved: That *Adam* and *Eve's* Salvation is much what the ſame with that of *Solomon's*, and both equally probable, though they are not certainly known and revealed. That nothing can be concluded of the Salvation or Damnation of thoſe, who were the Types of things to come: for it happened ſometimes, that one perſon, as *Eſau*, who was the Figure and Type of the Reprobate, was alſo that of the moſt excellent thing in the World; to wit, the Righteouſneſs of *Jeſus Chriſt*, under which a *Jacob*, a Sinner, obtained the Bleſſing of *God*: that thoſe promiſes and declarations in *Exod.* 34. and *Numb.* 14. are Conditional, and only appertain to thoſe that obey the Commandments of *God*, that keep within his Alliance, and that Repent, as *David* did in the 32. *Pſalm*, in ſaying, That *Bleſſed is he whoſe Tranſgreſſion is forgiven, whoſe Sin is covered. Bleſſed is the Man unto whom the Lord imputeth not iniquity, and in whoſe ſpirit there is no guile. When I kept ſilence, my Bones waxed Old; through my roaring all the day long. For Day and Night thy Hand was heavy upon me: my moiſture is turn'd into the drought of Summer.* Selah. *I acknowledged my Sin unto Thee, and mine Iniquity have I not hid: I ſaid, I will confeſs my Tranſgreſſions unto the Lord; and thou forgaveſt the Iniquity of my Sin.* Selah. ver. 1, 2, 3, 4, 5. The Remiſſion of Sins belongs to thoſe, whoſe-

Hearts are without guile or malice. That when Saint *Paul* sayes, that *God* would have all the World to be Saved, he means, that *God* under the Gospel hath not restrained Salvation to one particular Family; as under the legal Oeconomy. That those words of Saint *Paul*, 1 *Thess.* 5. *ver.* 9. *For* God *hath not appointed us to Wrath, but to obtain Salvation by our Lord* Jesus Christ, are to be explained by those of the 13. *ver.* of the 2*d. chap.* of the 2*d Thess.* to wit, *That* God *hath from the beginning chosen us to Salvation, through sanctification of the Spirit, and belief of the Truth. God* hath chosen us to be Sanctified, and hath Sanctified us to the end, that he might Save us. That all the World fallen in *Adam*, deserving the Curse, and Eternal Damnation, it is a signal Mercy to spare some from that general Condemnation. That how excellent soever the Efficacy of Redemption may be, 'tis only for those, whom *God* hath a mind to Save: and when *Jesus Christ* Prayed for those that Crucified him, he did particularly mark out those, in *Acts* 2. *ver.* 36. and 37. who would Repent at the Preaching of Saint *Peter*. And though there should be but one Saved for a Hundred Thousand that should perish, and be lost, yet Grace would superabound in this one person Saved, where Sin had abounded; as in the Example of the Thief. *Luke* 23. 40, 41. As to the Salvation of the Children of heathen Parents, or others; that is a *sealed Book*, which *God* does not permit us to open: It is sufficient for us Mortals to know, that none is, or can be, Saved, but by *Jesus Christ*: but we must not go about to determine, whether none are Saved, but who have known *Jesus Christ*. All other passages seem to carry with them some kind of probability and likelyhood, but they are not convincing; and their solution is very easy: In a word, they are nothing so forcive, as those which are alleadged for the support and maintenance of this third Opinion.

THOSE who hold it, alledge the rigour of the Examination at the Day of Judgment; and the Words of *Saint Paul*, in the 2 *Cor. c* 5. *v.* 10. *For we must all appear before the Judgment Seat of* Christ, *that every one may receive the things done in his Body, according to that he hath done, whether it be good or bad: Knowing therefore the Terror of the Lord*, &c. These words bring to my Remembrance, a Discourse I had some time since, concerning

Mr.

Mr. *Richard Baxter*, and the way he takes to ſtop the brisk carreer of ſinners, that are running in headlong to Perdition; and to ſnatch them by violence, as I may ſay, out of the clutches of the Devil: 'Twas ſaid, that he ſhut up the Gates of the Kingdom of Heaven, that ſo none ſhould enter in beſide himſelf, becauſe he does ſo mightily preſs the neceſſity of a Holy Life, and the ſmall Number of thoſe that ſhall be *Saved*: Upon which I alledged theſe Words of Saint *Paul*, much more ſtartling and thundring to ſinners, than ever yet any thing that Mr. *Baxter* has either Preached or Written. But that good, and pious Man ſhews himſelf to be not ſo much a *Boanerges*, as a *Barnabas*, by his Books, his Sermons, and his Diſcourſes: and indeed he hath Converted more Sinners from the State of Nature, to that of Grace, than, I believe, any in the World beſides, next to the *Apoſtles*, and *Calvin*. But to return to my ſubject.

THEY ſay, that the Univerſal deluge, all (ſave the Family of *Noah*) repreſents the ſmall Number of the Choſen and Faithful ones, whom *God* reſerved from the general Damnation. That of all the World, Curſed by the Sin of *Adam*, *God* only reſerved from him down to *Noah*, a very few of the Faithful, according to the proportion of eight perſons, to ſo many Millions of Men and Women, Drowned by the Flood: For although from thence we are not to conclude, that all thoſe who were in the Ark were Faithful, nor that all the Drowned were Damned; yet the few that were *Saved* from Drowning, and the vaſt Number of thoſe that periſhed in the Waters, were an expreſs Figure, not only of the Eternal Election of thoſe to whom *God* deſigned *Salvation*, but alſo of the extream different Number of the Elect and Reprobate; the former being ſo few, and the other ſo vaſtly great.

SO likewiſe, what we Read in the 1 *Peter*, *chap.* 3. *v.* 20. of *Noah*'s Preaching, *While the Ark was a preparing*, to one part of the World, to bring them to Repentance, and to prevent the Judgment of the deluge; repreſents, that as the Number of the called was incomparably leſs than that of thoſe, who were not called; ſo was the Number of the *called* incomparably greater, than that of the *Choſen*.

BUT as to *Saint Peter*; I ſhall not make uſe of one Argument

ment, which is fetched from him, to prove not only the difficulty of being Saved; but alſo the ſmall Number of thoſe that are Saved; nor from thoſe words in the 4. *chap.* of the ſame Epiſtle, *ver.* 18. *And if the Righteous ſcarcely be Saved, where ſhall the ungodly and the ſinner appear?* For the Apoſtle does not ſpeak in that place, of the difficulty of being Saved, but of eſcaping the Judgments of *God* in this World by afflictions, diſeaſes, poverty, and death.

THE Perſon of *Abraham*, and his Family, are repreſentations of the ſame Nature: eſpecially the Land of *Canaan* is a Type of the Kingdom of Heaven; in which there entered but a very few Perſons, comparatively to all the Inhabitants in the Earth; and thoſe that did not enter into it, were a plain and manifeſt Figure, that all the World ſhould go into Perdition, excepting a very few Perſons, that, in regard to —— the Number of thoſe, who enter'd into the Land of *Canaan*, are but as one Perſon for a Hundred Thouſand, or Millions, which filled the Earth, or at moſt but two Perſons, as *Caleb*, and *Joſhua*, for all the reſt of the People of *Iſrael*, that did not enter into it.

BUT to inſiſt more particularly upon this Subject; thoſe, who are for a very ſmall Number of the Elect, in compariſon of thoſe that are not Elected, conſider the Face of the whole World, during four Thouſand Years; where they do not find, that of Ten Thouſand, nay, a Hundred Thouſand, not to mention a Million, one ſingle Perſon could be Saved. It muſt be obſerved, that *God* from all the Corruption and general Idolatry, only reſerved *Abraham*, and his Poſterity; where *God* was outwardly Worſhiped, according to his Commands, except He always reſerved to himſelf ſome few True Worſhippers in divers Parts of the World, as the Family of *Job*, and thoſe of his Friends were: that this is a thing to be believed, that the greateſt part of *Abraham*'s poſterity, though they were circumciſed in their Fleſh, yet were not in their Hearts. That of a Hundred Perſons, Fourſcore and Nineteen, had not the Faith of *Abraham*; ſince that the Children of *Iſrael*, during their abode in *Egypt*, Worſhipped *Idols*, as we Read in the 20. *Ezek. ver.* 8. *But they Rebelled againſt the* Lord *their* God, *and would not hearken unto him; they did not every Man caſt away the Abominations of their Eyes, neither did they forſake the* Idols *of* Egypt. That under

der the Judges and Kings, they were, for the moſt of them, Idolaters: That more than half of the Kings of *Judah* were ſo, for above Three Hundred and Fourſcore Years, and that all the Kings of *Iſrael* quitted the Service of the True *God*, and drew off all their Subjects too, and turned them to their own Idolatry; but indeed, in the time of King *Ahab's* Reign, 1 *Kings* c. 19. *v.* 18. God *had left to himſelf Seven Thouſand in* Iſrael, *that had not bowed their Knees to* Baal, *nor with their Mouths had Kiſt him.*

AND certainly that diviſion of the Kingdom of *Iſrael* into two parties in the time of *Rehoboam* by *God's* Appointment, and who alſo gave the greateſt part to an Idolatrous Perſon as *Jeroboam* was, is a ſtrong proof and manifeſtation, that not only he ſuffered all the World, excepting the Land of *Canaan*, to remain in Perdition; but alſo, that the greateſt part of his People ſhould follow the courſe of the Gentiles, ſince that of Twelve Tribes, he *will'd* or permitted Ten of them publickly to embrace the Worſhip of the Gentiles, and to keep to himſelf but a handful of Perſons, as were the Seven Thouſand that did not conform to the Gentiles Worſhip; among whom alſo, I am confident, none can be aſſured that there were no Hypocrites; for even there of thoſe, who were not Idolaters, and who had not bowed their Knees to *Baal*, but were fixt to the pure Service of *God*; the Prophets ſaid, they *Drew near to* God *with their Mouths, but their Hearts were far from him.*

BUT it is eaſy to make it out, and it is but what may be gathered from the Words of St. *Paul*, *Acts* 14. *ver.* 16. That *God in times paſt, ſuffered all Nations to walk in their own ways*; and from the other Words of the ſame Apoſtle, in *Acts* 17. *ver.* 30. *That the times of this Ignorance* God *Winked at*, and from the *Greek* Word ὑπεριδὼν, that before the coming of our Saviour *Chriſt*, *God* left all the World in Perdition, and conſequently that for one of *Abraham's* Poſterity, that was Faithful, and Saved many Millions of Perſons among the Gentiles; or rather, all the Gentiles, were Reprobate. To which, if you will pleaſe to add this Conſideration, that among a Hundred Perſons of *Abraham's* Poſterity, thoſe that were called and circumciſed in their Fore-skins, ſcarce was there one found Circumciſed in Heart: Which does mightily advance the Number of the Re-

probate before the Coming of *Jesus Christ*.

THERE'S a very considerable Circumstance, which shews that *God* had but a very few Elect among all the Posterity of *Abraham*; for of all the Inhabitants of the Land, they were the most Vitious, Profane, and Idolatrous; and who came very near to the Character which St. *Paul* gives of the Natural Propensity, and Inclination of Mankind, *Tit.* 3. *ver.* 3. when he sayes, *For we our selves also, were sometimes foolish, disobedient, deceived, serving divers lusts and pleasures, Living in malice, and envy, hateful, and hating one another.* So that it seems *God* was willing to work in them the Miracle that he wrought in the Conversion of some Persons in *Rome* and *Corinth*, which were two of the most Infamous Sinks and Stews of the Empire, to the end that that Conversion might be so much the more Eminent and Notorious; the Heathens, such as *Tacitus*, describes them after a most Frightful and Terrible manner, *adversus omnes hostile odium*, the greatness of their Ingratitude, Malignity, Rebellion, Debauchery of Life, and Idolatry, is not Imaginable; and it is so much the more foul and enormous, if I may not add too Monstrous, as their priviledges were the more signal and peculiar, as were those of *The Ark of the Covenant*, the *Urim* and *Thummim*, the Oracles, Visions, Revelations both Vocal and Mental, the Prophets, and a Magnificent Worship; it was then when they were most addicted to Idolatry; for when all those priviledges ceased, and failed them, you Read not that they were much guilty of Idolatry, but rather in the room of it was substituted Pride, Pharisaical Arrogance, and the Opinion of their own Merits, which was worse than Idolatry it self; which you may see as you pass along, that *God* did not choose the Good, but the most Wicked, that so he might make them Good, to the End that Election might be of pure and free Grace; as St. *Paul* sayes, and the *Council of Orange*, *Nan quales nostro merito, sed suâ gratiâ*, which is also said in *Deut.* 7. *v.* 7, & 8. *The Lord did not set his Love upon you, nor choose you, because you were more in Number than any People, (for ye were the fewest of all People) but because the Lord Loved you*, &c.

AND to come to the time of our blessed Saviour, of the Ten Thousand to whom that Holy God-Man *Jesus* Preached, hardly will you be able to prove, or substantially find any thing, to ground

ground your Belief, that a Hundred of them were Converted, whereof the greateſt part thought that *Jeſus Chriſt* was come into the World, not to eſtabliſh a Spiritual Kingdom in it, made up of Saints and Faithful Souls, but to erect an Earthly Empire, and to ſet up Tabernacles in it. *Jeſus Chriſt* ſayes, that his Flock is ſmall; that there are but few perſons that enter into the Kingdom of Heaven; that when he ſhall come again upon the Earth, he ſhall not find Faith in it; that all the World ſhall run after the Beaſt: That the Number of the Elect is very little in Compariſon of thoſe that are Called, and Conſequently, that the Number of the Called is infinitely leſs, than that of thoſe who are not Called, and that know not what the *Chriſtian* Religion is. For if you ſuppoſe that before *Jeſus Chriſt*, there was but one Called among a Hundred Thouſand, if not indeed a Million of Men, and that among a Hundred *Called*, it was but a peradventure that one was *Choſen*; the Number of the Elect before the Advent of *Jeſus Chriſt* will amount to very little; for it is eaſy to ſhew by Hiſtory, that, I will not ſay of a Hundred, but of Five Hundred, or a Thouſand Called in *Iſrael*, ſcarce will you find one Faithful; inſomuch, that though the Called People were ſo greatly numerous, the Prophets, particularly *Eſaiah*, complain, that hardly one believed their Report, or Preaching.

BUT to make a little farther advance into the Evangelical Oeconomy, under which the Number of the Elect, is incomparably far greater than under the Legal; if, of Five and Twenty Men in the World, there had been one *Called*, and of Twenty *Called*, one *Choſen* or Saved; the Number of theſe latter, would not amount to above one of Five Hundred that ſhould be rejected: Which nevertheleſs would come up to many Millions Saved, more than under the legal Oeconomy: But yet, by this way of compting, the Number of the Saved before and after *Jeſus Chriſt*, would not amount but proportionably to this, a Million of thoſe that were Rejected for one Saved.

CERTAINLY, he that ſhall conſider that very ſmall Number of the *Chriſtian* Church from *Jeſus Chriſt's* time down to our days, will find that, during all the long ſpace from that to this, the Number of Chriſtians hath not been one perſon, in Twenty or Thirty that lye under the darkneſs of Paganiſme,

and that of a Hundred *Chriſtians* who are Called, Fourſcore and Nineteen have been either *Hereticks*, or *Papiſts*, or *Mahumetans*, or *Wicked*.

EUSEBIUS remarks in the Third Age of the Chriſtians, that when they had ſome Abatement of the Perſecution, as during Fourteen or Fifteen Years before *Diocleſian*, they ſlackened alſo in their heat of practiſing Piety, and Charity, which in the time of Perſecution did ſtrongly Unite them: and that Hereſies, Factions, Ambition, and Avarice, had corrupted the Biſhops; and that they all ſtood in *need* of a rugged Phyſitian, ſuch as *Diocleſian* was, to purge out their ill Humours, and to correct their diſorders and Extravagances.

SULPITIUS SEVERUS in the Fourth Age, gives them both no better Character: he ſayes of the Biſhops, that they were Vitious, Ambitious, and Factious Perſons: and that ſuch Perſons as *Ithacius* and *Idacius*, who were offended at thoſe Opinions that were ſound, and Orthodox, had rooted out almoſt all Charity, when they would not let the Emperour *Maximinus* be at any quiet until he had put to Death *Priſcillian* and his followers, contrary to the ſentiment of *Martin*, Biſhop of *Tours*; who was much-what like to the Prophets *Ely* and *Eliſha*, for being almoſt the only Perſon that kept his Integrity, and his Holineſs amidſt the general Corruption.

SAINT *Chryſoſtome* in the ſame Age does oft-times enlarge himſelf upon this Subject of the ſmall Number of the Elect, or of the Faithful, in compariſon of thoſe that deſcend into perdition. In one of his Homilies, on the Song of *Solomon*, he tells us, that as he was preaching to a very great Audience, to no fewer, in his Judgment, than Twenty Thouſand Men, all on the ſudden he fell into a ſhower of Tears, upon a Thought that then came into his Head, and extreamly troubled him; but yet which he was reſolved not to conceal from them, and therefore brake forth to this effect, That he did not believe there were above Nineteen or Twenty Perſons in all that great Amaſs of People, that belonged to the Election of Grace, and in whom might be found the Character of a faithful Soul and Child of *God*. And in another Homily, he compares the Efficacy of the Word upon the Hearts of Men, to a great quantity of Water which may be poured through ſeveral ſieves upon many Thouſands of Bottles,

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whoſe Necks are ſo ſtrait and ſmall, that notwithſtanding the great Effuſion, there are but a very few drops comparatively get into thoſe that have moſt, and but very few of them have any at all.

To come to the Fifth Age; *Salvian*, a famous Presbyter of *Marſeilles*, who lived a long while in that Age, ſpeaking of his time, ſayes, that except a very ſmall Number, the *Chriſtians* were a ſink of Wickedneſs and Impurity. *Prater pauciſſimos quoſdam, qui mala fugiunt, quid eſt aliud Chriſtianorum cœtus, quàm ſentina vitiorum? lib.* 3. *de proviđen. & Gubernat. & Judic. Dei.* And all over, that Holy Man teſtifies the grief he had to ſee how *Hereſy*, and the practice of Vices Reigned among *Chriſtians*, whoſe horrible Diſorders he openly took Notice of.

IF the greateſt Lights of the pureſt Antiquity of the Chruch were but Darkneſs; and if of Five Hundred at that time, it can ſcarce be believed that one was Saved, what might we think of the Number of the Elect in the following Ages, which, as *Jeſus Chriſt* ſayes, were Darkneſs it ſelf, when all the World ran after the Beaſt; and when, for above Eight Hundred Years, as we learn from *Genebrard*, *Bernard*, *Baronius*, and a Hundred other Romiſh Writers, Thoſe Monſters of Men, the *Popes*, worſe than *Caligula*, *Nero*, and *Heliogabalus*, &c. drew all *Europe* into Perdition? and this is what all the World would ſuffer *per docilitatem aſininam*, unleſs ſome or other were permitted to reſiſt the *Pope*, and to demand of him by what Authority he led ſo many Millions of Perſons into Hell; for it is that which we learn from the Canon, *Si Papa*, &c.

FOR as the *Romiſh* Religion according to it's maxime, is nothing elſe but the ſubmiſſion of Kings and People to the *Pope*, ſo likewiſe, the Doctors of it would have them to pay him a blind Obedience, and follow him whereſoever he leads, and to conform themſelves to his Faith in all things. *Andradius* in his defence of the Councel of *Trent*, *lib.* 1. ſayes, *Fide Papæ noſtra continetur, & ex ejus unius Anthoritate ſalus omnium pendet.* That is as much as to ſay, *our Faith and our Salvation depend alone on the Authority of the* Pope. *Thomas Aquinas*, *Cajetan*, *Gretzer*, *Valentia*, *Cornelius Mus*, *Turrecremata*, *Vaſquez*, *Becanus*, alſo *Baronius*, and *Bellarmine*, hold the ſame Language: this laſt tells us, *lib.* 4. *de Pontif. Roman. cap.* 5. *That if the* Pope *erred in*

commanding that which was vitious, and in forbidding the exerciſe of vertuous Actions, we ſhould be obliged in Conſcience to believe that thoſe Vices were Vertues, and thoſe Vertues Vices. For that is Conſequently no leſs than if he had ſaid, that if the *Pope* would Command us to believe, that Hell, ſuch as it is Deſcribed in the Holy Bible, is Paradiſe, where he himſelf goes, we ought, not only in good manners, but in duty, as obedient Children to our Holy Father the *Pope*, to follow him into that Hell, and ſo Damn our own Souls for the ſake of having his good company there, becauſe that is, forſooth, the *Pope's* Paradiſe. But thank him heartily for his Love as much as if we did. Let him injoy his beloved Roaſt-meat by himſelf, for we ſhall not deſire to lick our Fingers ſo dearly, by ſlinging our Sop into his Dripping-pan.

IF we deſcend lower down after *Gregory* the firſt, as far as to the Reformation began by *Luther*; I do not believe, that, for more than a Thouſand Years, one Perſon among Ten Millions of the *Chriſtian* Religion, could be Saved, excepting a ſmall ſcantling of the *Waldenſes* and *Albigenſes*: For, throughout all *Europe*, it differed but very little from *Paganiſme*: it conſiſted only in falſe Miracles, in fabulous Legends, in the ſervices of Images, in Adoration of Reliques, in Pilgrimages, and in viſits of Holy places for the obtaining of pardons, in the Apparitions of Souls come back from *Purgatory* which demanded *Maſſes* for their eaſe and comfort. There was no talk then of the Holy Bible, it was *a ſealed Book*, and unknown to the people: ſcarce was *Jeſus Chriſt* acknowledged by the Saints. And, as in an obſcure Night, when the Heavens crack with dreadful Thundrings, and the pointed rayes of flaky Lightening rowl about in quick ſucceſſions of Redoublement, the people quake and are aſtoniſhed; ſo was it during this black Night of Ignorance, they heard the Thunders of Papal Excommunications, which overthrew Kings, and frightned the People; and by their Interdicts ſent whole Nations into Hell, as it happened in the time of *Innocent* the Third in *England*, where for above Six Years the Divine Service was ſuppreſt.

CERTAINLY, whoſoever will but make any ſerious Reflections on the State of Elapſed Ages, firſt and laſt, will ſcarce find that in the laſt, when only the Name of the *Pope* had the vogue,

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one perſon could be Saved in a Million; and that in the firſt, of a Hundred, or two Hundred Perſons, ſcarce one *Fidelis* could be found, whoſe Holineſs of Life was correſpondent to that of his Doctrine. And indeed, in our days, we can meet with but very few that Labour to *Take the Kingdom of Heaven by violence*; And who, like *Jacob*, wreſtled with *God*, and did not let him go before he had Bleſſed him; or who have thoſe Marks of the Children of *God*, without which they cannot be Saved, who Live according to the Spirit, and not after the Fleſh; who are Regenerated and Renewed in their Underſtandings, Wills, and Affections; who are paſſed from the State of Nature, into a State of Grace; from Darkneſs into the Heavenly Light, and Kingdom of *God*; whoſe Religion is to viſit the Widdows, and the Fatherleſs, the Priſoners, and the Sick; to help the Orphans, and thoſe that are Poor and in Diſtreſs; who abſtain from Carnal and Wordly Luſts and Concupiſcences; whoſe Thoughts, and Meditations are more ſet upon *God*, than the World, who live Soberly, and Righteouſly, and Holily in this preſent evil World; who Dedicate all their thoughts, words, and actions, all their ſervices and labours, their eating and drinking, their ſleeping and waking, to the Glory of *God*; whoſe Converſation is as becomes a Citizen of the Heavenly *Jeruſalem*, who are continually either in Prayer, or at leaſt in a diſpoſition and inclination to Pray, and to Meditate on the great works of Creation and Redemption; all whoſe diſcourſes are about their progreſs and advance in Regeneration, Mortification, and Crucifixion of the Old Man; who continually Live in the Joys of the Holy-Ghoſt, poſſeſſing a peaceable Serenity of Mind, and an undiſturbed quiet of Soul, in this perſwaſion, that it's Peace and Reconciliation are made with *God*, by the Blood and Death of *Jeſus Chriſt*; Who feel the Motions of this Spirit of Adoption, which make them to cry *Abba Father*; who find within them that Seal, which is the earneſt of their Inheritance, who have received the White Stone, where they Read their Names Written among thoſe that are Enrolled to Eternal Life; who perceive within them thoſe pantings and longings, that Spiritual hunger and thirſt after the Word of *God*, and his preſence in Glory: Whoſe Lives are a conſtant preparation for being diſſolved, and going to their Bleſſed Redeemer *Jeſus Chriſt*; and as in that of

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a Child of *God*, which is a continual progreſs towards the Kingdom of Heaven, though they do not always think at every ſtep they take, of the place where they are going, yet they ſtop not in the way; But are dayly adding ſome Cubit to their Spiritual Stature, and never give over growing in Grace, until they are grown up to be perfect Men in *Chriſt Jeſus*, which is a daily drawing nearer to their Eternal Felicity.

ALL theſe truths of the marks and ſignes of the Children of *God*, which ſhew that the Number of the Elect, in whom they are found, is very ſmall, will yet appear in a much fuller Evidence, if you will caſt your Eyes upon the preſent State of the World, and acknowledge that which is as great a Truth as any can be in the World.

1. THAT there is no Salvation but among Chriſtians.

2. THAT the greateſt Number of the Elect, and of the Faithful, is among the Reformed: For I would not generally exclude the *Papiſts* from Salvation: If the Marks and Signs of the Children of *God* are compatible with the Errours in Faith, eſpecially when thoſe Errours proceed from Ignorance, and not from an intereſted Obſtinacy and Stubbornes.

3. THAT as to the Proteſtants, among whom the Number of the Elect cannot enter into any compariſon with that of *Papiſts*, ſince that it is very much doubted, whether any *Papiſt* can be Saved, and ſince that the others are called after a more efficatious manner: That as, I ſay, to the Proteſtants, the Number of the Elect appears incomparably more ſmall than I dare affirm, *viz.* that for Twenty that are Reformed, ſcarce is there one Elected; for it might be very true, that in a hundred Reformed, it would not be a little difficult to find one perſon, in whom, either he himſelf, or any other could find the true Marks of an Elect, or Child of *God*, if he would ſincerely and without Diſguiſe diſcover himſelf all Naked, that ſo he might Warrantably ſhew to himſelf or others thoſe real ſigns of a Child of *God*, which do not only conſiſt in an outward profeſſion of pure Chriſtianity, and of the Truths of the Goſpel, but in a Converſion from the State of Nature into that of Grace, which every one will find by the happy Motions and Workings of the New Man, and by his Reformation or Regeneration within his Soul.

1. THE firſt Working, and that which is the firſt Degree of Converſion, is that Light which *God* poures into the Soul, to diſcover, and convince it how black and deformed it is by Sin, and how that by that Sin, Man has attracted to himſelf the Curſe of the Law, and the Wrath of *God*.

2. THAT that horrour for Sinning againſt *God*, is that which does rather Afflict and Torment the Sinner in his Conſcience, than the terrour of Damnation, by reaſon of that Sin.

3. THAT both do ſtir us up to have Recourſe to *Jeſus Chriſt*, and to the knowledge of the neceſſity of a Saviour.

4. AND moreover, that both of them, or rather that one of the two do incite, ingage, and carry us out to beg of *God*, the Grace of his Holy Spirit, to obtain of him the Eye of Faith, but it muſt be of a lively Faith that ſees, and contemplates the excellent greatneſs of the Price, the Value, the Perſon, the Satisfaction, Death, and Paſſion, Blood and Righteouſneſs of *Jeſus Chriſt*, and to apply him withal his Benefits to his Soul for Salvation.

5. AND then to have both incite, and ſtir us up to beg with unwearied earneſtneſs the Aſſiſtance of that Bleſſed Spirit, that ſo Faith may produce good Works, that conſiſt *In denying all Ungodlineſs, and Worldly Luſts, and in living Soberly, Righteouſly, and Godlily in this preſent World*; *and in loving* God *withal our Hearts, and all our Strength, and our Neighbours as our ſelves.*

FOR, the Work of Converſion, and to be Converted to the Senſe of the Holy Scripture, is not to Correct ſomething in the Carnal courſe of our Lives; but it is to bring down and Mortify the Fleſh, and *to Live after the Spirit*, it is not to ſerve the World, and the Fleſh after a more reſerved and ſparing manner, to flee from ſcandalous and ſhameful Sins, and ſuch as cry to Heaven for Vengeance, and taking up a form of Piety, and of Religion; but it is to make an abſolute exchange of Maſters, to quit our old deſires, and ways of living, and *To have our Converſations in Heaven, with the Father, and with his Son Jeſus Chriſt*, and to become an abſolute Citizen of the Heavenly *Jeruſalem*.

NOW the Religion of a Child of *God*, conſiſts not only in a regular practiſe of the Duties of Prayer, hearing the Word, receiving the Sacrament of the Lords Supper, nor in the obvi-

ating thoughts that preſently come into ones Mind, concerning *God*, the Immortality of the Soul, Death, the Day of Judgment, and an Eternity of Woe or Happineſs after this Life; but it conſiſts much in ſpiritual mindedneſs, which is ſo to know the things of the *Spirit*, as to believe them, ſo to believe them, as to affect them, and eſteem them; ſo to eſteem them, as to ſeek them, and ſo to ſeek them, as to ſeek them in the firſt place: Again, Religion conſiſts in a continual ſerenity of Joy, peace of Soul, tranquility of Mind, which hungers and thirſts after Righteouſneſs, and *As the Hart pants after the Water-brook, ſo pants ſuch a Soul after the Living God*, and his Grace; it waits upon God with an earneſt heat and fervor, lives in a perpetual renuntiation, or denying of the world, its vanities, and pleaſures, even thoſe that in themſelves are lawful; and inceſſantly makes forward towards the poſſeſſion of Eternal good things: above all, towards thoſe of knowing and loving *God* with all the ſatisfaction and raviſhment imaginable: He, whileſt he is in this body of Clay, does not allow any thought to paſs in his mind, and any word to come out of his mouth, nor any action to be done by him, nor does he ſet himſelf to the ſtudy of any thing, but what he deſires might be his laſt thought, word, ſtudy, application of mind, converſation, and company of his life, ſtill following this maxim; *Id ſemper agas quod velles noviſſimè.*

THIS muſt every Child of God do, with fervour, zeal, and earneſtneſs: for who will believe, that theſe paſſages of the Holy Scripture; *Enter in at the ſtrait Gate: Work out your Salvation with fear and trembling: and fight the good fight of Faith; ſtrive againſt fleſh and blood, againſt principalities and powers: Continue in Prayer with zeal and fervor: Preſs forward toward the mark for the price of the high Calling: Forget the things that are behind, and reach forth unto thoſe things that are before.* I Crucify my body and my fleſh, for fear leaſt after all my efforts (if they be not ſerious and fervent) I am become my ſelf a caſtaway. Who will believe, I ſay, that all theſe places of the Holy Scripture, do only ſpeak of a ſlight indeavour that may be well enough acquitted, although it be done negligently?

IN ſhort, a Child of *God* is continually aſpiring with a moſt Ardent deſire, after Communion with *Jeſus Chriſt*; he is evermore ſaying within his own Breaſt. O, when ſhall I ſee the

Face

Face of my Lord *Jeſus Chriſt!* He eſteems all time loſt and flung away, which is not employed in Praying, in good Works, in Meditation on the Word of *God*, and in drawing near to his preſence: he ſayes with the Church, draw me, and then ſhall I run after thee. And delivering me from every evil Work; receive me into thy Heavenly Kingdom.

THIS being the *Idea* and the Character of the true Sons of *God*; I leave it to every ones ſerious thought and conſideration, if of a Hundred Perſons among thoſe that are called Proteſtants, He that will make a narrow and *impartial inquiry* into his Heart, ſhall find there, all theſe Marks and Signs of a Child of *God*, which are the Eſſential and Conſtituent parts belonging to every True Chriſtian. Our Proteſtants now a days for the moſt part make up a new and qnite-different Figure in the World, they never ſound their Conſciences ſo deep, to trouble themſelves about finding theſe Signs. They love a more free and generous Air, as that of prophanity and indiference in matters of Religion, and are pleaſed much with reading *Tractatus Theologico-Politicus*, which Teaches them to call in queſtion the Chriſtian Religion: They are now bred up in the School of thoſe Caſuiſts, of which *Thomas Aquinas* ſpeaks, that Teach the Practiſe of Negative Virtues, and the art of coming juſt upon the Skirts of Sin, without Touching the Sin it ſelf. Thoſe who have the moſt Affection for the Proteſtant Doctrine, love to Trouble themſelves but with a very ſmall pittance and ſcantling of holineſs of life. The Proſelytes that have abandoned *Rome*, and are convinced of its Errors, and Abominations, are very well ſatisfi'd at their Converſion, but they take time to be fully informed, that the true Converſion is that which turnes them from the ſtate of Nature to that of Grace.

FOR, to ſpeak of theſe Proſelites a little more largely; theſe Gentlemen, whether ſincere or otherwiſe, that have left the Religion of *Rome*, to embrace the Reformed, and whereof a great number for that end have come over into *England*; thoſe are obliged above all things to examine the ſincerity of their Converſion, that ſo by that means they might know, whither it be only a forſaking of the Errors and Abominations of *Rome*, outwardly to profeſs a Religion that has baniſhed and caſhired them, whither this, as I have ſaid, be a converſion from the

ſtate of Nature to that of Grace: For true converſion is a ſaving change that takes down ſelf, and ſets up Chriſt as Soveraign in the Soul. See *Pſal.* 78. *ver.* 36, 37. *Nevertheleſs, they did Flatter him with their Mouths, and they Lyed to him with their Tongues; for their Hearts were not right with him, neither were they Steafaſt in his Covenant.* I wiſh our Proſelytes, (yea, all Profeſſors) to try the Sincerity of their Converſion by ſuch a Scripture, and whether their Religion is joyned with a deſign to lead a Life, whoſe Holineſs, Purity, and Exactneſs may be Commenſurate to that of the Proteſtant's Doctrine: and they are alſo obliged to ſound their Conſciences, concerning the *Reſſorts* and Motives that actuate them, and concerning the ends they propoſe to themſelves, in changing their Religion; whether that end be to come off from Monkiſh Auſterities, and the impure Cælibacy of *Rome*, to an Innocent condition that exempts them from them: and in a word, whether in the choiſe they make of Religious Aſſemblies with which they joyn, they do not prefer that, where they find the return of Wordly Advancement, and exalting Benefices, to thoſe, where there are no other charms than the pure, ſimple, and naked Truth. But to return to my former Subject, of the indifferency of men in matters of Religion, and alſo much more in that of Piety, which is now ſo exceeding rife in the world.

VISIT all the Families, and all private perſons that talk of Religion, and I am greatly deceived, if moſt of them are not Proteſtants rather thorough birth, cuſtome, chance, and intereſt, than through an illuminated and unbiaſſed Zeal: moſt of which time, excepting that which is to be employed in the neceſſities of life, and of a trade, or calling, is ſpent either in the ſtudy, or in converſations, companies, and diſcourſes that are either but of very little ſignificancy, or elſe they are dull and troubleſome, and ſerve only to fill up the *vacuum* of time, in which a great deal of pains is taken to do nothing, and wherein they labour rather to divert and recreate themſelves, than either to inſtruct others, or be inſtructed by others; This would be a diminution of their happineſs to entertain the company with matters of *Theology*, concerning the infinite Majeſty of *God*, the excellence of the perſon of *Jeſus Chriſt*, and the Fruits that accrue to us from his Offices, his Death, his Reſurrection, and his Aſcenſion into Heaven: concerning

cerning our great priviledge, that *God* hath revealed to us the high Miſteries of the Chriſtian Religion, whileſt that all the World lies, either in Ignorance, or in the corruption of Religion or of Manners; concerning the neceſſity of a lively Faith in *Jeſus Chriſt*, and of the miſery of thoſe who have no Intereſt in Him: In a word, concerning the hour of Death, and of our future Condition when ever we ſhall depart this Life. I might add, that the converſation of the Children of *God*, is much different from that of the Children of this World, when they meet together These latter will rather ſpeak of any thing, than of thoſe matters that have any relation to the Kingdom of Heaven: and it may be applyed to them what we read of *Saul*, 1 *Sam.* 10. *v.* 16. who talking to his Uncle, ſaid unto him, *that he had told him plainly, that the Aſſes were found, but of the matter of the Kingdom, whereof* Samuel *ſpake, he told him not a word.*

TO conclude, I would refer my ſelf to the judgment of any ſober, conſidering perſon, what a vaſt and almoſt an infinit proportion in number one ſhould find, if from *Adam's* days down to ours, there ſhould be a compariſon made of the Sum total of the Elect, with that of thoſe who are not Elected: I believe that this Proportion would be of one Perſon Saved, to a Million that is not; that is to ſay, That there is a Million of Reprobates to one that ſhall be Choſen ſo as to be Saved. Which is a dreadful thing to think on, that the Lord *Jeſus Chriſt* came only into the world, to ſave one man among a hundred thouſand, or rather a million: 'tis an Abyſs that neither can, nor ought to be ſounded; for if one durſt to proceed upon this Subject farther than I have done, and well weigh the words of St. *Paul*, *Acts* 14. *v.* 16. *that God in times paſt ſuffered all Nations to walk in their own wayes:* that is to ſay that he left them to periſh in them, one might find that the proportion of the number of the Reprobate, to that of the Elect, before the advent of *Jeſus Chriſt*, and before the preaching of St. *Peter* had converted three thouſand men, is not the number, neither of a thouſand, nor of a million, but of millions of millions, to one perſon that is ſaved: but alſo one might find that in the poſterity of *Abraham*, which *God* had Choſen out of the general damnation to be his Elect People, and his peculiar Treaſure, there were ſcarce of five hundred or a thouſand *Iſraelites*, one

that was Elected, faithfull, and in whom there was no guile. In ſhort, this Arithmetick is much what the ſame as of thoſe of the Stars, which one is counting in a clear and uncloudy night, and of which there will be no end of counting by the freſh diſcovery of thoſe that as yet perchance one has never ſeen.

I DARE not make any farther advance in this matter, for fear leaſt I may be deceived in the calculation; not in having made the number of the Reprobate too great, but becauſe I have not made it great enough: Eſpecially, after all the Reflections I might make thereon, as are theſe.

1. THAT *God* ſaies by his Prophet *Jeremiah*, chap. 3. *v.* 14. That *he will take but one of a City, and two of a Family*, or Tribe, to bring them to *Zion*.

2. THAT of a hundred Sheep, he will leave ninety and nine of them to their wandrings.

3. THAT *Jeſus Chriſt* took a long journey to the *City* of *Samaria* which was called *Sychar*, to ſignalize the converſion of one poor *Samaritan* Woman; as you may read in St. *Johns* Goſpel, *chap.* 4. *v.* 4. to 27.

4. THAT preſuppoſing that *the Children of Iſrael were as great in number as the Sand on the Sea-ſhore, yet but a Remnant of them ſhould be ſaved*, κατάλειμμα, *Rom.* 9. 27. and *Eſaiah*, 10. 22. 23.

5. THAT he had but very few names in *Sardis*, Rev. 3. *v.* 4.

6. THAT of the ten Leapers that were Healed, there was but one that returned to give Glory to *God*, 2. *Kings*, *chap.* 5. 14. and *Luke*, 17. from *ver.* 12. to 20. and *Luke*, 4. 27.

7. THAT, in truth, there is incomparably a far greater Number of common Stones and Pebbles, than there is of Diamonds, Saphires, and Perles, and yet that *Jeſus Chriſt* does only make uſe of ſuch as theſe in the Building and Structure of his Houſe.

8. THAT few perſons find the Way, that leades to the Kingdome of Heaven, and life Everlaſting; that ſtrait is the Gate, and narrow is the Way that leades thereunto, and that few there be that find it.

THERE yet remains one conſideration, that ſtrongly proves the Number of the Elect and faithful people of God to be in-

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comparably ſmaller than can be imagined: and that is, that Piety, now at this day is looked upon as a crime, not only by the Enemies of the Reformed Religion, but alſo by thoſe that make a ſpecious profeſſion of it, after the moſt Orthodox manner, and who reckon Excellent Men, ſuch as Mr. *Baxter*, and a thouſand others of good quallity and condition in the World, that imitate and follow his Piety, Hypocrites, Fanaticks, and perſons whoſe Reaſons are but Fancies, and they diſtracted too.

THE Characters of ſuch, have of late days made the greateſt Beauty of the Theatre, they have been farced, and burleſqued there, and yet none has been offended; not thoſe that ought in a more peculiar manner to have had the chaſteſt Eares, have conceived the leaſt horrour for any ſuch thing; their moſt heavenly Expreſſions, which are the Language of the upper *Canaan*, have been turned into ridicule and buffoonery. A moſt impious practiſe, and even for which the very Heathens will riſe up in judgment againſt us, for they have always bore the laſt averſion to it, and againſt which the whole Romiſh Clergy of *France* did ſet themſelves, when *Moliere* would have played his *Tartuff*, and ſuch oppoſition did he meet withal, that he could not get it *Acted* for above the ſpace of two years. But, as one has ſaid very well and truly, we live in an infidel Age, wherein wickedneſs Reigns with Reputation.

ALL the time which I have been here in *England*, which is now upwards of fifty years, I have been making my Remarks on the Genius, and Tempers of Men, and I have obſerved ſuch an averſion in moſt againſt the people and ſervants of *God*, and their way, that many Maſters of Families (otherwiſe ſober, civil, true, honeſt, juſt-men, upright-dealers, and Good Friends) for fear of being lookt upon as men of an affected Zeal, and ſo Puritans and Hypocrites, have wholly neglected Family-Duties, and to inſtruct their Children and Servants in the right ſaving Knowledge.

ALL theſe Conſiderations of the ſmall number of the Elect, and that of a hundred thouſand, and it may be, of a million of men from *Adam* down to our days, we can ſcarce be ſure of one that is ſaved, ought to make every perſon careful and ſollicitous about his own Salvation, to refrain ſinning as much as if *God* did receive into grace and favour but one ſingle perſon among

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a hundred thouſand, or a million; but alſo to hope as much in his Mercy, as if all the world was ſaved, *ſince that the Blood of* Jeſus Chriſt *cleanſes us from all ſin.*

I SHALL now ſpeak a word or two for the comfort of repenting ſinners, that examining their lives, and ſquaring it according to that terrible threatning in 2 *Cor.* 5. 10. *forwe muſt all appear before the Judgment Seat of* Chriſt, *that every one may receive the things done in his body, according to that he hath done, whither it be good or bad.* which frightens them in ſuch a manner, as to take from them all hopes of finding Pardon and Grace at the Throne of *God* at the laſt day; it is, if thoſe words of St. *Paul* were to be underſtood according to the Letter, that there ſhould not be one ſaved, no not *Moſes, Caleb, Joſuah, David, Daniel,* St. *Peter,* and St. *Paul:* and St. *Paul* would contradict himſelf, when he makes man's Righteouſneſs to conſiſt in the remiſſion of ſins; but St. *Paul,* in the *v.* that follows, when he ſays, *knowing therefore the Terrors of the Lord, we perſwade Men,* makes it plain enough to be underſtood, that he only uſed that way of Speech to give Terrour, and to perſwade Men to fly to *Jeſus Chriſt* who is our Righteouſneſs, by whoſe Righteouſneſs our Sins are Pardoned, and which is Imputed to us, as he ſayes in the 19. *ver.* of the ſame *chap. God was in Chriſt Reconciling the World to himſelf, not imputing their Treſpaſſes lunto them, and hath committed unto us the Word of Reconciliation,* and in the 21. *for he made him* (that is Chriſt) *to be Sin for us, who knew no Sin, that we might be made the Righteouſneſs of* God *in him.*

Mr. *Baxter,* that great Phyſition of Conſciences that are Bruiſed and Ulcerated, ſayes, that many Periſh, not by reaſon of the greatneſs of their Sins, as of that of their incredulity and unbelief: that thoſe who Deſpair of the Grace of *God,* do leſſen the value of the Satisfaction of *Jeſus Chriſt,* and of his Redemption: that his Mercies are offered to us in ſuch a manner, that nothing is required of us but that we would accept them, without any thoughts of our own ſo much unworthyneſs to hinder and keep us from it: that as his Promiſes are of Grace and Mercy, ſo likewiſe are they Rich and Great: that in Truth, they are made to thoſe who Believe, but alſo that Faith is a gift of *God,* that he gives it as liberally, as he grants the Pardon of Sins.

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HERE I muſt take notice by the way, that if ſome are thrown into deſperation by thoſe Words of St. *Paul*, 2 *Cor.* 5. 10. *Others are Split upon the Rock of Preſumption*, when they Read the other paſſages of St. *Paul*, ſuch as theſe; that *God* hath not appointed us to Wrath, but that we might be Saved by *Jeſus Chriſt*, and that *God* would have all Men to be Saved, and come to Eternal Bleſſedneſs. But we ought to avoid both theſe Extremities; not to make uſe of theſe, as of a Pillow, to lean our Heads upon, and Sleep the more ſecurely in our Vices; nor of the other, to be Terrifyed and Thunder-ſtruck, with the dreadful Threatnings that are but ill underſtood, and worſe interpreted.

AS therefore Preſumption and Deſpair, are the two Rocks upon which moſt Men fall and ſplit themſelves: I ſhall give you here an Account as to the Firſt, which will be ſufficient to awaken the moſt ſtupid and daring; 'tis of a Dialogue between an *Atheiſt* and a Chriſtian, whoſe Piety mainly conſiſts in being Superficial. I have Read it in ſome of Mr. *Baxter*'s Writings, and I have alleadged it in one of my former printed Books called the *Idea*, &c. a little more at large: "The "latter put the Queſtion to the other, and asked him, how "his Conſcience could be at any reſt and quiet in that deſpe-"rate Condition which he was in? And I, ſayes the other, "have a great deal more reaſon to wonder, how you can bear "up, and not ſink under the great Oppreſſion of your troubled "Spirit, which you cannot chooſe but have, when you Profeſs "ſo much, and Live ſo vaſtly different from it? If I could but "be perſwaded of the Truth of the *Chriſtian* Religion, and that "after this Life, there was to be an Eternity either of Happi-"neſs or Miſery; I would ſhake Hands withal my Jollities and "Carnal Satisfactions, and would not ſuffer a Moment of my "time to ſlip away from me, which ſhould not be ſpent in the "Practiſe of Devotion, and Religious Exerciſes, withal the "careful exactneſs and diligence imaginable, that ſo I might, "in the greateſt Meaſure I was capable, be prepared for this "Eternity.

I HAVE met with muchwhat the ſame thoughts among thoſe of Mr. *Paſchal*, concerning thoſe Unreaſonable, if I may not call them Mad men, that will hazard an Eternity of Happineſs, either to be loſt, or gained, in a courſe of Life that ſhall be quite contrary to the Word of *God*; and who think they

Play with a ſafe Card in their Hand, by flattering themſelves, and fancying that their Death ſhall be a ſwallowing of them up in a State of Annihilation; and that whatever may be the Paradiſe of thoſe that are good, this Annihilation ſhall be the Hell of the Wicked.

MINUCIUS FELIX, who lived about the latter end of the Second Age, was very pleaſant upon theſe laſt. *I am not Ignorant*, (ſayes he) *that there are many, whoſe Conſciences give them frequent checks and ſtings, who rather do wiſh, than believe, that their Death might be followed with an Annihilation; for they had rather crumble into duſt, and ſo to nothing, than return and live again to ſuffer Eternal Torments.*

NON ignoro pleroſque Conſcientiâ meritorum, ſe nihil eſſe poſt hanc vitam magis optare quàm credere: Malunt enim penitus extingui, quàm ad ſupplicia reparari.

ALSO Satan cloſes in with the flattering imaginations of thoſe that are preſumptuous, repreſenting to them the fine promiſes of *God*, whil'ſt in the mean time he conceals from them his Commands: he will be often remembring them with the Words of St. *Paul, Rom.* 8. that *There is no Condemnation to thoſe that are in* Chriſt Jeſus, but he will beg your excuſe for not adding the following Words of the Apoſtle, *to wit*, that this promiſe does not belong *To thoſe that walk after the Fleſh, but after the Spirit:* he will be putting them in mind of King *David's* Words in *Pſal.* 130. *v.* 3. *with thee there is Pardon*, but to be ſure not a tittle further will he go, and ſay, *viz. that thou mayſt be Feared:* and of thoſe of the 32. *Pſal. Bleſſed is the Man to whom the Lord imputes not Iniquity*; but there he ſtops, and you ſhall never hear by his means of the next Words, *and in whoſe Spirit there is no Guile, ver.* 2. The prophane and diſſolute perſons find the Words of St. *Peter* much to their Guſto, that *Jeſus Chriſt bore our Sins in his Body on the Tree*; but what the Holy Apoſtle adds cannot at all go down with them, *that ſo we being Dead to Sin, may live unto Righteouſneſs.*

AS to thoſe who on the other Hand are moſt inclined to deſpair, or at leaſt to fall into great doubts and fears of their Salvation, I would adviſe thoſe poor ſinful wretches, to derive conſolation from the examples of the Churches of *Sardis* and of *Laodicea:* for thoſe are a good Antidote againſt Deſpair, and for them thar find there is nothing but Wickedneſs in them, and Death by Sin, and that they have only the name of *Chriſti-*

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ans, and have denied the Power of Godlineſs, and that they deſerve for ever to be caſt out of the preſence of the Almighty; for even into that miſerable and much to be pittyed Eſtate, *God* Councels the Sinner to make uſe of the remedy that he offers him, and to touch the Scepter of Grace that is extended to him, which will infallibly work the Salvation of the Soul: for *Gods* ways are not like to Man's, nor are his thoughts like to thoſe of Sinful Fleſh; his ways and thoughts are inconceivable, the heighth and depth of them immeaſurable towards Sinners that Repent, where by the ways of *God*, you are to underſtand thoſe of his Mercies, and not thoſe of his Knowledge, and his Wiſdom.

SAINT *AUSTIN*, *lib.* 1. *de verâ & falſâ pœnitentia*, cap. 5. hath a very excellent Thought upon this: ſayes he, *Adhuc cum deſidet, & ſuam nequitiam comparat Dei benignitati, finem imponit virtuti Dei; dans finem infinito, & perfectionem auferens Deo, cui nihil deeſt etiam quod cogitare non poteſt.*

NOW if his Mercies are extended to all the Children of thoſe that are Called, and as well to thoſe that lived under the legal Oeconomy, as under that of the Goſpel, and who Dyed before ever they arrived to the uſe of Reaſon; this conſideration will exceedingly diminiſh the Number of thoſe who go to Perdition, and will proportionably increaſe the Number of thoſe that are Saved: For, my only deſign in this whole diſcourſe is, to ſpeak of Men Deceaſed above an Age ago, and after they had the exerciſe and uſe of Reaſon.

SINCE then the Number of the Elect is ſo ſmall, and that this Election is to be determined (I mean the knowledg that we have of it) by Death: that to Dye is an action of the laſt Importance, and that it is inevitable; that if we err, and take our Meaſures wrong in this one ſingle action, we are undone Eternally; let every ſtep we take, every thought, word, and action, have a tendency to this action which is to end our lives; let every day be ſpent as if it was that immediately before our laſt, in a perpetual, and conſtant renouncing and diſ-ingagement from the World, in the ſtudy and practiſe of a fervent Piety, in Prayers to *God*. for the obtaining of peace of Mind and Conſcience, and the Aſſurance of the Remiſſion of our Sins, through the Righteouſneſs, Blood, Death, Reſurrection, Merits, and Interceſſion of our Lord and Maſter *Jeſus Chriſt*.

THE great art, ſayes Mr. *Baxter*, to Dye in the Aſſurance

of our Salvation, is to Nouriſh and feed this Aſſurance all our Lives long, and to take care that we Live every day ſo, as we would Live the laſt Day, when we come to draw our Breath by the Moment, and that our Conſciences, which is as a Thouſand Witneſſes, may Teſtify to us upon our Death-beds that we have ſpent our Lives in the Study and Labour to know *Jeſus Chriſt*, and him Crucified, and applyed by Faith, and in a continual Diſengagement from the World, & all the flattering and deceitful Vanities of it: and that *God* hath given us Grace, not only to abſtain from the moſt crying and enormous Sins, but alſo to watch over our Sins of infirmity, that ſo we might not voluntarily fall into them: But yet our Conſciences would have leſs Reaſon, than that of the Convert-Thief on the Croſs, *Luke* 23. whoſe whole life had been ſpent in Theſts and Robberies, to magnify the greatneſs of the Mercys of *God*, and to apply to our ſelves thoſe words, *that where ſin hath abounded, there hath Grace much more abounded.*

I have Read in an Excellent Author a pretty thought upon this Subject of the marks and ſigns of a Child of *God*, which much what agrees with that of Mr. *Arnaud* in his Logick, or art of thinking, concerning the value and eſteem that is put on perſons according to the greatneſs of the places in which they are, or to that of their Eſtates and Fortunes: ſo likewiſe do they moſt an end make an erronious Judgment of themſelves and others in matters of Piety and Devotion; that a great meaſure and abundance of this Grace in a poor man, that is low in the World, and ſo deſpicable in the Eyes of his Neighbours, ſhall not make half ſo much a Noiſe, as a little quantity ſhall in a perſon that is Eminent in Dignity, and Wealth; becauſe the Illuſtrioufneſs of their Rank greatens the *Idea* of their Piety and Zeal for Religion, and they themſelves are tempted to cut out a Soul, a Vertue, and a Piety as Refined and Exalted as their Fortunes.

Mr. *Baxter* and others, ſuch as Dr. *Sibbs*, *Robert Bolton*, and Biſhop *Hall*, who are the true *Barnabas's*, and who walk contrary to *Job's* Friends, in their method of comforting the Afflicted, ſpeaking of the Rigorous Severity of that Tribunal, in 2 *Cor.* 5. 10. that makes ſinners, even thoſe that are penitent, to tremble with fear and Aſtoniſhment, ſay, that the juſtice of that Tribunal is full as much layd open in the pardon of the greateſt ſinners that repent, as it is in the vengeance and puniſhment of the Impenitent, and thoſe that know not *God*. That when *Jeſus Chriſt* ſhall come in the laſt times, he will do the ſame to thoſe

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that truly have repented, though even at the laſt Period of their Lives. That the mercies ſhown to *Zacheus* and the Thief upon the Croſs, were particular and perſonal, but that the comfort which is to be received from thence is common and publique. But however they would have us to take notice of the Method which *God* takes in the Converſion of the greateſt of Sinners, *viz.* that the greatneſs of the Repentance which he beſtows, and of an humble, broken, and contrite Heart, ought to be commenſurate to the greatneſs and enormity of the Sins that have been Committed.

THE ſame Divines give us a mark, which may be called Infallible of a Child of *God*, and which diſtinguiſhes him from one that is not. They ſay, that of this latter, the old man is always new in him; that there where he cannot ſin any longer becauſe of his Age, or of his Weakneſs and Impotency, or elſe for want of a convenient opportunity, he notwithſtanding, yet retains the ſame good will and affection for ſinning as ever he had: He runs over his paſt ſins with pleaſure in his Imagination, and he refreſhes his Memory with them without any trouble, or remorſe. In a word, He that is not a Child of *God*, retains a natural propenſity and inclination to ſin, but a true Child of *God* is quite of a contrary diſpoſition and temper; he is turn'd in the mould of that faithful one, of whom St. *John* ſpeaks in *Chap.* 1. *v.* 12, 13. where giving us the *Idea*, image, and Character of him, he concludes him in this ſhort Period, ſaying, *that as many as received him, to them gave he Power to become the Sons of* God, *even to them that believe on his Name: which were born not of Blood, nor of the will of the Fleſh, nor of the will of Man, but of God.*

THE ſame *Engliſh* Divines do likewiſe agree with all the Caſuiſts, as well Proteſtants as Papiſts, that are not Jeſuits, nor of the ſame dip with *Burchard* & *Navarrus* in one conſiderable mark of a Child of *God*, and which is comprehenſive of all Divinity, and the practiſe of Piety: and which may alſo be ſhut up in one Period, to wit, that notwithſtanding the Atheiſme whither ſpeculative or practical, ſecret or open that reigns at this day in the World, and all the difficulties which are met with, in the interpretation of the Holy Scriptures, which humane Reaſon cannot unravel and underſtand, a man ought to be ſtrongly and powerfully perſwaded of the Truth, goodneſs, and excellency of the *Chriſtian* Religion, and of this Holy Scripture which contains it; and that it will be his Eternal Happineſs, if it be now his Principal care, ſtudy, and

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indeavors to obey the Commandments and Precepts, to believe the Promiſes, to fear the threatnings, and to be conformable to the examples of it.

NOW, as I have deſcribed the various, and happy motions and workings of the Spirit of *God* in the Hearts of his Elect and Children; I think it may not be amiſs to conclude all in obſerving the degrees by which he who believes he has Holineſs enough to ſerve his turn, falls into a Reprobate Senſe. And this will be a good Leſſon to thoſe, who begin to fall off from, and ſlacken in the Study and Practiſe of Piety. He then who ſuffers any Object to come into his ſight, which may be likely to Corrupt, even the moſt Religious Soul, if he fixes his eyes or thoughts too long upon it, ought to be very careful, that no evil ſuggeſtion or impreſſion ſteal into his mind; that this evil impreſſion do not produce in him ſome inward pleaſure and ſatisfaction, this pleaſure beget a ſecret conſent and approbation, which brings him on inſenſibly to Practiſe, and from Practiſe to proceed on afterwards to Cuſtome, this cuſtome to Ingage him to a Habit; and then to excuſe it, and to flatter himſelf about it, daubing it over with ſome fine Colour or other: and, in a word, to juſtify, even openly his Sin, & ſecurely to lull himſelf, & Glory in it.

THE *Engliſh* divines, as *Sibbs*, *Bolton*, Biſhop *Hall*, *Simmons*, Dr. *Owen*, Mr. *Baxter*, Mr. *Jenkins*, &c. as they are of a moſt exemplary Piety, ſo likewiſe they have more Addreſs and Skill to deal with the Conſciences of Men, either in diſcovering the Degrees that precipitate and caſt them into a Reprobate ſence, or elſe in Healing thoſe that are Ulcerated through Deſpair; they have, I ſay, more Skill to deal with Conſciences through their own Experience, than all the Caſuiſts of other Countrys can pretend to: the good Biſhop *Hall* in his 61. *Soliloquy*, pag. 239. calls it the Sting of Holineſs, when Men dally with Sin, and will be playing with ſnares and baits, and allow a ſecret liberty in their Hearts to Sin, conniving at many workings of it, and not ſetting upon Mortification with earneſt endeavours: though they be convinced, yet they are not perſwaded to ariſe with all their might againſt the Lord's Enemies, but do his Work Negligently, which is an accurſed thing, and for this *God* caſts them upon ſore ſtreights.

THESE Conſiderations ought to induce every Man to ſtand very carefully upon his Guard; and to beg of Almighty *God* continually to preſerve him from the Temptation of firſt Aſſaults, for fear leſt ſuffering himſelf to be ſurprized with them, he paſſes on further, till

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at laſt he comes to a Reprobate ſence: he ought to do what *Jeſus Chriſt* Commanded, *i. e.* Watch and Pray, that he enter not into Temptation. *In primis finibus arcendus-hoſtis: nam cum intravit, & portis ſe intulit, modum à captivis non accipit, dum ſervitur libidini, fit conſuetudo, dum conſuetudini non reſiſtitur, fit neceſſitas.* And not to dwindle and grow leſs in the ſtudy and practiſe of Piety, every *Chriſtian* ought continually to hold this neceſſary Ballance in his Hand, where on the one ſide, he puts the Horrors and Terrors of Damnation, and on the other, the Excellency, the Advantage, and the Happineſs of Regeneration. Upon which my *Father* has an admirable thought in his *Chriſtian Combat*, which I believe, without any hyperbole, I may venture to ſay, I have Read above five hundred times, that ſo I might make it my principal Meditation, and therewith I will conclude. *Eternal Damnation*, ſayes he, *is ſo horrible a ſtate of Evil, and our Regeneration, an attempt or indeavour ſo full of difficulty, that to avoid and eſcape ſo great an Evil, and to obtain ſo great a Bleſſing and Happineſs, and to Labour in ſo good a Work; all diligence may be accompted ſlack, and our utmoſt Endeavours too remiſs, and ſleighty.*

FINIS.

Advertiſement of the Author.

SEVERAL having Read theſe Reflections in the French *Tongue, have Taxed me on the one ſide for circumſcribing the Number of the Elect among Proteſtants, within too Strait and Narrow Limits; and on the other ſide, for having too much widened and inlarged it as to the* Papiſts; *I found my ſelf obliged to take off this imputation as well as I could, and therefore preſent you with this ſhort Apology, in hopes that my defence will be ſufficiently juſtified by it. I am of Mr.* Baxter's *Opinion, that* God *does more connive and wink at the Latitude of Errours in Doctrine, than at that of impurity of Life, for St.* Paul *does not exclude from Salvation all the* Corinthians, *becauſe of the great and heinous Errours among them in Doctrine, but he is very ſevere towards thoſe that are negligent and careleſs in the Conduct of their Lives, and that have no regard for the looſneſs of their Carriages. And, ſo likewiſe are our great Divines of the ſame Opinion, that Holineſs of Life, may very well be compatible with Errours in Doctrine, (and thoſe great ones too) and with the hopes of Salvation: And that ſeveral have ſuf-*

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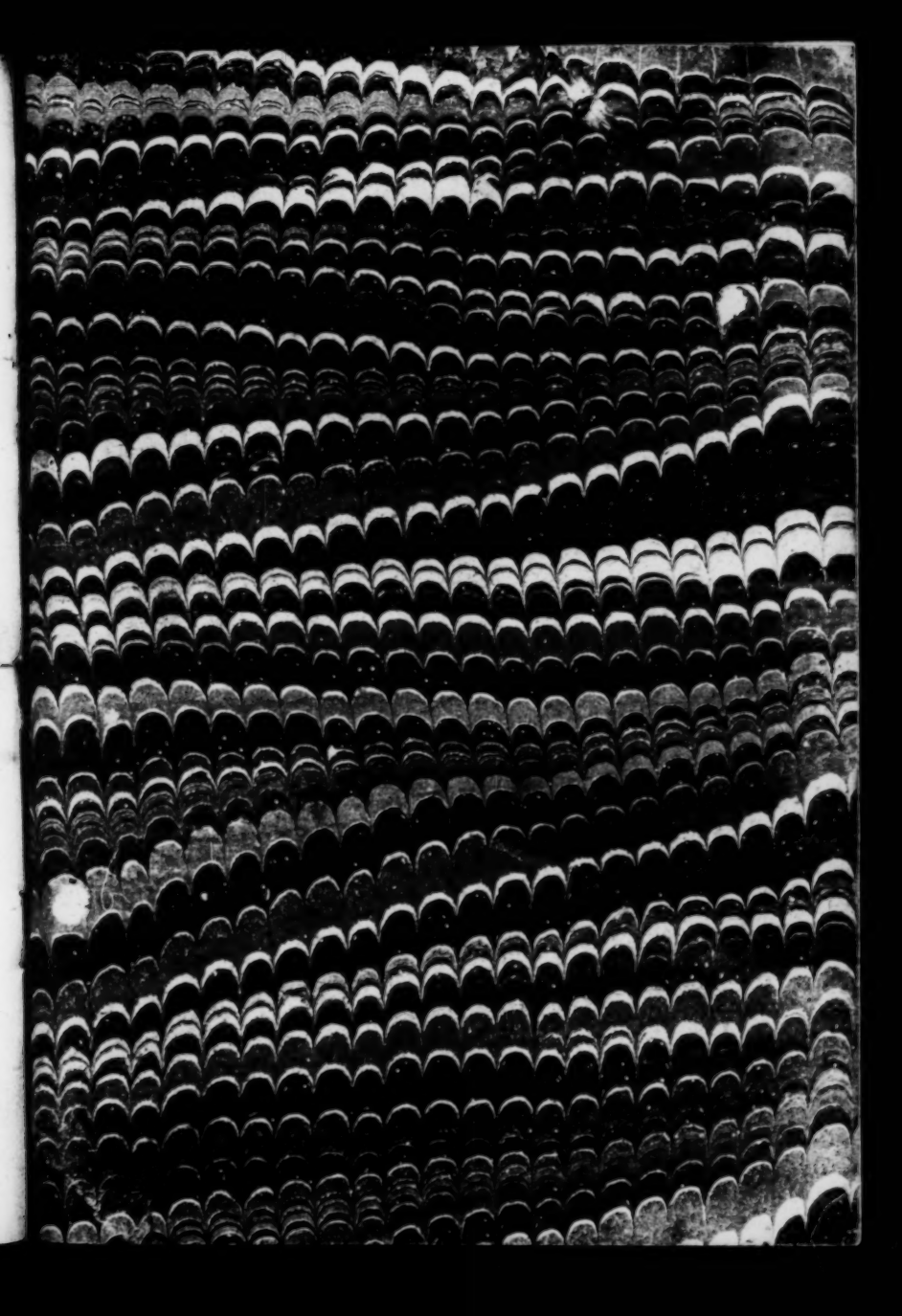
fered Martyrdom for Jeſus Chriſt, *who notwithſtanding have held very ſtrange Erronious Opinions and Doctrines, among the Number of whom were St.* Irenæus, Juſtin Martyr, *and St.* Cyprian; *eſpecially* Juſtin, *of whom Mr.* Daill'è *obſerves the childiſh thoughts he had of the perſon of* Jeſus Chriſt, *And who will bring into diſpute the Salvation of* Clemens Alexandrinus, *although he believed that the wiſe Heathens, who were called the* Sages *of their Countrys, were Saved by the Phyloſophy of* Plato, *and* Ariſtotle? *And I would not Condemn to Hell* Bernard *for having believed the Doctrine of Purgatory, nor although he continued all his Life-time in the Communion of the Church of* Rome: *he was another St.* Auſtin *in the matters of Grace, and he had the ſallies and flights of a perſon animated and influenced by a Spirit truly Divine, burning with a Holy Zeal towards the advancing of the Kingdom of* Jeſus Chriſt, *and he had an extraordinary Elevation of Spirit, and of good Devotion, which ſome vnadviſedly and raſhly have called* Monkiſh Devotion: *I have been much affected with his Spiritual Aſcent or Ladder which reacheth from Earth to Heaven; he makes four Rounds or Steps of Aſcenſion; the firſt is, Reading; the ſecond, Meditation; the third, Prayer; and the fourth, Contemplation: Reading ſeeks after the ſweetneſs and pleaſure of a happy Life, and the tranquility and peace of the Soul; Meditation finds it; Prayer begs earneſtly for it; and Contemplation taſtes and injoyes it: Reading fixes him to the Bark of thoſe Words of* Jeſus Chriſt, Bleſſed are the pure in Heart, for they ſhall ſee *God; Meditation takes notice that* God *doth not ſay, Bleſſed are thoſe that are pure in Body, but only in Heart; it is not enough to have the Hands Clean and Innocent, when the thoughts are Defiled and Criminal; it conſiders the price of this Purity, it's Reward, and the Pleaſure that is to be taken in it, eſpecially in the laſt reward of all, which is that of ſeeing* God; *Prayer warmed and heated by Meditation, makes the Soul as humble and as low before* God, *as was the Woman of* Canaan, *and then it was raiſed up to the boldneſs of begging of* God *this Purity of Heart firſt, and afterwards in his time the Beatifical Viſion of his Preſence; Contemplation ſayes with St.* Peter, *that* it is good to be here, *Separated from the* Ambaraſſments *and troubles of Secular Affairs; it is all together taken up with the object of all our hopes, and forgetting all the Advantages, all the Profits and the Beauties of this World, it is abſolutely ſet upon the purſuit of one ſole Good and Beauty, which renders not only the Soul to be all Lovely and Spiritual, but the Body too.*

FINIS.